

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

May 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

ANC News: Crime Report, ANC/ABC Working Group, Fire Command Ctr. Update, 2009 ABC Board Slate, MMVAC Update, Open Space Discussion, Lesley Working Group Rep. 1 - 4

ABC Community: Annual Meeting, ABC Seeks Volunteer Photographer, Spring Photos 4 - 5

ABC School Programs: Intro. Arts Presents "Deraldo Ferreira" 5

City Wide: CPL Summer Reading, Families First Programs, FRESH Movie Screening 6 - 7

Sacramento St. Gallery: Kid-Curated Art Show 7

ANC News

NOTES FROM THE APR. 15 MEETING

Agassiz Neighborhood Crimewatch Network Update and Neighborhood Crime Report

In light of recent incidents in the area, Jen Lacroix, organizer of the Agassiz Neighborhood Crimewatch Network, advised renewed caution. Ms. Lacroix and Cambridge Police Sergeant Paul Oppedisano lead a discussion about recent crime in Agassiz and surrounding neighborhoods.

Assault

Residents expressed concern about an attempted sexual assault that occurred in Somerville near Porter Square. Sgt. Oppedisano stated no similar incidents have been reported in Cambridge and explained that Somerville and Cambridge Police departments seek help to solve this crime. He added, "I've been here for 30+ years and I know that we rely on tips. The more eyes we have the better. Don't hesitate to

call 911. You don't need to leave your name if you don't feel comfortable doing so."

Residents are invited to join the Agassiz Neighborhood Crimewatch Network by contacting Ms. Lacroix at cambridge_neighborhood@yahoo.com.

House Break

Residents should also be aware that people pretending to be employees of the Cambridge Water Department have been gaining access to and stealing items from residents' homes. Sgt. Oppedisano confirmed that residents should contact the City department to verify employment if someone they're not sure of approaches their home.

Larceny from Vehicles

Vehicular thefts continue to remain a problem in the city, with GPS units ranking highest among the most stolen items. In a 45-day period, fifteen cars have been broken into in the Agassiz neighborhood. Items are often confiscated through smashed car windows.

The Sergeant reported that the most popular areas for vehicle thefts in Agassiz and Porter Square include:

- Somerville line near Francis Ave.

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



MAY 20 - 7:30 PM

*Baldwin School Cafeteria
28 Sacramento Street
(Press buzzer for entry)*

AGENDA

Annual Meeting: The Council will vote to approve the slate for the 2009 Board of Directors. All are invited to attend, meet the Board, and enjoy light refreshments.

- Mass. Ave. going toward Porter Square

Patterns for time of day include:

- Mass. Ave: evening hours
- Streets further removed from Mass. Ave: 7-9 PM

Neighborhood Crime Report

In the Agassiz neighborhood, Sgt. Oppedisano reported three aggravated assaults, one auto theft, and fifteen motor vehicle larcenies.

Prevent Thefts from Your Motor Vehicle

The Cambridge Police Department has compiled a list of suggestions to prevent thefts from motor vehicles:

- Roll up windows and lock all doors
- Park in well-lit areas
- Always be aware of the area you are parking in
- Hide all valuables out of view. If you can see them from outside the vehicle, so can thieves
- The trunk of your car is a great spot to place valuables

GPS Thefts

- Take the unit and clip out of the car with you
- If you must leave the unit in the car, be sure to hide both it and the clip or suction cup that holds it. Thieves see the clip and know there is a unit somewhere in the vehicle

- Frequently wipe your dash to remove tell-tale dust rings that are left by suction cup mounts. Replace the cover to the vehicle's power outlet when not in use
- Record the serial number and keep a copy in the glove compartment and with your valuable papers at home to assist police with recovery should your unit be stolen

Working Group on Council/Board Relations

Joel Bard, a long-time resident who once served on the agency's Board of Directors, gave a brief report about the newly formed ANC/ABC Working Group. The committee's goal is to strengthen the relationship between Board and Council and includes representatives from both:

- Joel Bard
- Willie Bloomstein
- Anna Eckert Byrne
- Stephen Diamond
- Miriam Goldberg

Mr. Bard stated that a goal of the working group is to improve communication. ANC meeting chair Stephen Diamond currently presents updates on Council activities to the Board at every Board meeting. Going forward, the Board will begin to provide a monthly summary of its activities to the Council.

Mr. Bard added, "There's an opinion that the agency should update its bylaws, but first we need to figure out what the problems are and address them."

Fire Command Center Update

A group of neighbors, including Joel Bard of Wendell St. and Richard Barran of Hammond St., met with representatives from Harvard University to discuss the Fire Command Center. This structure, which serves as an egress from an underground parking garage and houses safety equipment, is located on Hammond St. and serves Harvard's Northwest Science Building. Harvard last attended an ANC meeting in December 2008 to discuss changes to the Fire Command Center.

Fred Meyer, Realtor

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Although Harvard remains committed to redesigning the Fire Command Center, the current economy dictates that the project will be pushed back three years or more. In the meantime, Harvard agreed to plant trees to improve the landscaping and better camouflage the structure. The University will schedule a public meeting on this project in the next couple of weeks.

ABC Board Slate for 2009

Phoebe Sinclair announced the slate for the 2009 Board of Directors of Agassiz Baldwin Community. All are current Board Directors returning for another term, and each would serve a two-year term going forward:

- Stephen Diamond
- Hull Fulweiler
- George Hein
- Wendy Prellwitz

A new Parent Representative candidate has been nominated for a two-year term:

- Gao-Wen Shao, parent of a Baldwin School and Agassiz Afterschool student

Stephen Diamond invited Council members to make additional suggestions for nominations to the Board. Additionally, the Council welcomed Gao-Wen Chao to the meeting and voiced full support of her nomination.

MMVAC Update

Wendy Prellwitz, ABC Board Director and member of the Maud Morgan advisory group, provided an update on talks with Lesley University related to the Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center (MMVAC). She explained that ABC has been speaking with Lesley for two years about a partnership that would pair the Art Institute of Boston (AIB) with MMVAC to create an “Arts District” in Porter Square.

Although, ABC won its court case and plans to build some portion of the arts center in its original location behind 20 Sacramento St., the agency continues to pursue a partnership with Lesley University. Because no substantive

agreement about the relationship or shared space has been made, the Maud Morgan advisory group wants to keep discussions moving forward and ultimately receive something in writing that states an official relationship between MMVAC and AIB.

Bill Doncaster, Director of Community Relations at Lesley, told the Council that while Lesley has asked their architects to include MMVAC in the plans for the new AIB space, details would not be worked out until the University begins to design the building. He stated, “Programmatic aspects will require our arts faculty to be engaged. We’re looking to have a starter meeting with faculty, with more substantive work being done in the fall.”

Ms. Prellwitz concluded that ABC views the potential partnership as a win-win where both can share resources and space. In the interim, MMVAC seeks temporary studio space for its programs, which began last fall with drawing studios for adults and middle school children.

Ms. Prellwitz stated, “We looked into obtaining temporary space at Lesley’s new dorm at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Wendell, but that didn’t work out. Our goal now is to meet with Lesley to discuss our partnership before the rest of the Zoning Overlay District meetings commence. We also are looking to identify temporary studio space for our September programs, such as an empty rental space on Mass. Ave., or in one of Lesley’s properties, which they have said they may be able to help us with.”



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Community Discussion of Open Space at Porter Square

Stephen Diamond told the Council that, if and when the parking lot behind Lesley’s University Hall (previously known as Porter Exchange) is developed, Lesley has agreed that 20% of the space will become public open space. In addition, 5,000 feet of the space in front of the proposed new AIB will be contiguous open space once it has been built at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Roseland St.

As these plans are for the future, many residents would like to see improvements now. Some suggestions include:

- Develop more publicly accessible open space that can be used today
- Landscape improvements along Roseland St.
- Further develop the walkthrough behind University Hall to the Porter Square MBTA station
- Complete a multi-modal traffic study for the square
- Provide funds to plant trees along Mass. Ave.

Lesley Working Group Report

Stephen Diamond, member of the city-appointed Lesley/Community Working Group, reported that Lesley presented a revised version of their Zoning Overlay District plan to the working group as well as at a number of city meetings. His summary of these meetings follows:

The **Historical Commission** recommended that

the North Prospect Church be made a historical landmark. Mr. Diamond clarified that designating a building as a historical landmark does not “freeze” it, but requires that any alterations to it be approved by the Historical Commission. The Historical Commission will meet on this issue again.

The **Planning Board**, which makes non-binding but influential recommendations to the Cambridge City Council, strongly supported Lesley’s proposal.

The **Cambridge Ordinance Committee**, which oversees zoning in the city, did not take a stand on Lesley’s proposal, but heard testimony from people with differing points of view. The Ordinance Committee will meet again to discuss Lesley’s proposal and has requested that other city departments provide additional information at the next meeting.

ABC Community

ANNUAL MEETING

On Wednesday, May 20, the Council will vote to approve the slate (see below) for the 2009 Board of Directors. Below are current Board Directors returning for another term, each would serve a two-year term going forward:

Officers for a two-year term:

- Hull Fulweiler, Howland St., Clerk
- George Hein, Howland St.
- Stephen Diamond, Frost St.
- Wendy Prellwitz, Wendell St.

A new Parent Representative candidate has been nominated for a two-year term:

- Gao-Wen Shao, Fayette Street, parent of a Baldwin School and Agassiz Afterschool student

All are encouraged to attend and meet the Board. Light refreshments will be served.

What: Annual Meeting



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When: Wednesday, May 20, 7:30 PM
Where: Baldwin School Cafeteria,
28 Sacramento Street



Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs

SEEKING VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS

Currently in the process of redesigning our website, ABC seeks a skilled professional or hobbyist digital photographer willing to help us set a friendly tone on our new site with colorful and relevant photos. Sights we need captured include:



- 20 Sacramento St. Community Center and backyard
- Sacramento St. Gallery
- North Hall Community Room
- ABC School Program Rooms at 20 Sacramento and Baldwin School

Your photos may be featured on our website! To volunteer or learn more contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

SPRING BLOSSOMS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Please enjoy these photos snapped by Agassiz resident and ANC Meeting Chair Stephen Diamond.



INTRODUCING ARTS AND CLUB PASSIM CULTURE FOR KIDS PRESENT "DERALDO FERREIRA & THE AFRO BRAZILIAN ENSEMBLE"

Please be our guest for this year's seventh Introducing Art Performance featuring Deraldo Ferreira and the Afro Brazilian Ensemble.

This lively show highlights three principal elements of Brazilian culture: music, marital arts, and dance. The performance weaves all these elements together with a sense of humor and play.

The rhythms played throughout the show are steeped in the traditions of the past and brought into the present through soulful interpretation. The performers, drawing upon lifetime experience and practice, vibrantly demonstrate forms of dance and their origins.

For more information please contact us at (617) 349-6287 x11 or email jedelman@agassiz.org.

When: May 13, 2:00 PM
Where: Baldwin School Stage,
 28 Sacramento Street,
 Cambridge
Ticket Price: Afterschool groups free
 \$2 per person, \$5 per family
 School groups please call ahead



City Wide

CPL SUMMER READING PROGRAMS

Summer reading starts when school ends.

I Scream for Books!

Stop by your neighborhood library, pick up a reading log, and enter the weekly raffle for prizes! All kids, kindergartners through fourth graders, are welcome. There are also special summer events including puppet shows and the chance to meet some Alaskan sled dogs, Lemon the Duck, and cool reptiles.



STUFF is the summer reading program designed for preteens and teens. Earn a raffle ticket for every 3 hours of reading! Raffle prizes are \$25 gift certificates.

Parents: Did you know that all branches of the Cambridge Public Library have free and discounted passes to many museums and zoos?

Information: (617) 349-4409
Museum/zoo passes: (617) 349-4011

FAMILIES FIRST PARENTING PROGRAMS

The O'Neill Branch Library, located at 70 Rindge Avenue in Cambridge, presents free Families First Parenting Programs for all parents and child care providers. Pizza will be served. Childcare will be provided, but is limited. Registration required.

To register or for more information, please call: (617) 349-4409 or TTY (617) 349-4421.

Positive Approaches to Discipline

Date: Monday May 4th
Time: 6:15-7:45 PM

When children tease, hit, or whine, discipline is an ongoing parenting issue! This session will give you alternatives to yelling and punishing, and you will leave this workshop with specific

strategies to use at home.

Helping Children Manage Their Anger

Date: Thursday, May 20th
Time: 6:15-7:45 PM

Anger is normal and unavoidable. It can also be difficult for parents to handle when children act out and misbehave. This session helps parents understand what triggers angry responses in children. We will share productive ways to help children express their anger or frustration and learn about appropriate responses for parents.

Helping Siblings Live Harmoniously

Date: Monday, June 1st
Time: 6:15-7:45 PM

Parents want their children to have warm feelings for each other, but it doesn't always happen that way. Siblings often fight or compete! This workshop helps parents learn when to become involved and how to encourage problem solving between siblings.

Brought to you by the Cambridge Early Childhood Resource Center.

Save the Date
Tuesday, May 19, 2009

MATCH-UP Interfaith Volunteers Presents

**Ending Social Isolation
Among Elders:
Promoting Connection through a
Community Response**

A symposium featuring:

- A keynote presentation on the impact of social isolation on elders' health and well-being by Dr. Lisa Berkman, Director of the Center for Population and Development Studies at Harvard University
- A response and discussion among representatives from the legal, human services, religious, and government sectors

**Symposium: 1 pm – 5 pm
Celebration: 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM
Northeastern University**

FRESH MOVIE SCREENING IN CAMBRIDGE

FRESH celebrates the farmers, thinkers, and business people across America who are re-inventing our food system. Among several main characters, FRESH features urban farmer and activist, Will Allen, the recipient of MacArthur's 2008 Genius Award; sustainable farmer and entrepreneur, Joel Salatin, made famous by Michael Pollan's book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*; and supermarket owner, David Ball, challenging our Wal-Mart dominated economy.



What: FRESH Screening
Date: May 28th
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Harvard Northwest Building,
52 Oxford Street, Room B-103,
Cambridge, MA 02138

A panel discussion, moderated by Theresa McCulla, the manager at Harvard's Food Literacy Project will follow the screening with guests:

- Joel Salatin, Founder, Polyface Farms
- Will Allen, Founder, Growing Power
- Henrietta Davis, Cambridge City Council
- Michael Leviton, Chef, Lumiere Restaurant
- Ana Joanes, Director and Producer of FRESH

Watch the trailer at www.FRESHthemovie.com
Find screening dates and ticket info:
www.freshthemovie.com/screenings

Sacramento Street Gallery

KID-CURATED!

Prepared by Jacy Edelman, Program Director

Agassiz Baldwin Community Afterschool is gearing up for our next project-based learning event, our student-curated Fantasy Combination Creatures Art Show. This eight-week project taught our Kindergarten - 5th grade students how to choose and create artwork around a theme, write and distribute a call for art, and hang artwork as well as write artist statements.

Curriculum was enhanced through hands-on visiting artist workshops, which have included local curators, gallery installation professionals and artists. We are visiting the Harvard Graduate School of Design and the Boston Museum of Fine Art for workshops on installation and activities related to the theme.

We also invited Robyn Zellar, Baldwin School Art Teacher, to have her students submit artwork. In addition, we have put out a call for artwork to twenty area Cambridge afterschool programs to submit work under the theme "Fantasy Combination Creatures."

What: KID-CURATED!
When: May 11th - May 29th
Where: Sacramento Street Gallery
Reception: Thursday, May 14th,
3:30-6:00 PM

We hope you'll join us!



Community Calendar

May 2009

Wednesday, May 13	6:00 - 7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Wednesday, May 13	2:00 PM	Introducing Arts Performance & Club Passim's Culture for Kids present "Deraldo Ferreira & The Afro Brazilian Ensemble" Baldwin School Stage, 28 Sacramento St.
Thursday, May 14	3:30 - 6:00 PM	Reception for "Kid-Curated" at Sacramento St. Gallery 20 Sacramento St.
Wednesday, May 20	7:30 - 9:00 PM	Annual Meeting Baldwin School Cafeteria, 28 Sacramento St. All are welcome
Monday, May 25		Memorial Day Holiday ABC School Programs and Office closed

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community, distribution 2,000. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or email. The newsletter is also posted each month online at www.agassiz.org. Items of interest to the neighborhood may be submitted for consideration no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

THE WHISTLER MAY 2009



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